

From: Damon Raphael
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/23/02 12:19pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

Attention:

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I am:

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I am a physician and a long time licensed user of Microsoft software since 1978. I am an advanced computer user having studied computer programming at Pima Community College and continue to program, build and use computers for my business and personal pleasure.

I am a founding member of the Tucson Free Unix Group (<http://www.tfug.org>) and use Redhat Linux version 7.2 as my OS of choice. My business uses MS Windows 98 SE. My wife uses a Macintosh G3 with OS 9.

I wish to point out to you one of the most annoying and typically disruptive practices of Microsoft:

I recently purchase a Dell Latitude CPt laptop computer directly from the manufacturer. I installed my Redhat Linux system on it and was unable to configure the modem to dial out. After many hours of trying to rectify the problem, I called Dell for help. I was informed that the modem chip on the motherboard was a "Winmodem" and not compatible with any other operating system except Microsoft Windows.

The same problem exists with "Winprinters". These dedicated "Win" devices use code from within the Microsoft Windows OS to implement the operation of the printer rather than code that ordinarily would be found in a chip on the motherboard of all the other kinds of printers available to consumers.

Microsoft has influenced most of the printer and modem manufacturers to produce these "Win" devices which, when purchased unknowingly by the consumer, render it impossible to tryout or use a non Microsoft OS.

Microsoft will not release the code which drives these "Windevices" nor will they provide a software driver which would allow competing operating systems to use these devices. The potential loss in monetary value, lost time and aggravation to the consumer is staggering when one considers the large number of such devices out there.

This is only one illustration of Microsoft's stranglehold on the consumer's options in the OS universe.

Microsoft should be forced to release the code which drives the "Windevices" and manufacturers such as Dell, Canon and HP should be fined for producing and selling these devices without warning the unsuspecting consumer of the consequences of their purchase. Better still, "Windevices" should be illegal.

Yours truly,

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